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|  | **MINUTES OF THE CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE OF THE NORTH EAST SURREY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 09 NOVEMBER 2016 AT 18.00 IN THE SKILLS PARK BOARD ROOM.**  |

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|  **PRESENT 1** | **IN ATTENDANCE** |
| Chris Muller (Chair)Lance FinnLynn ReddickCliff HallMike Broadbent (HE Student Governor)Josh Spooner (FE Student Governor)**1 Attendance = 86%** | Fred Carter – Vice PrincipalMark Hillman – Assistant Principal Dario Stevens – Vice PrincipalDavid Round - Clerk to the Corporation |
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| **01.16** | **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** |
| Apologies were received from Avril Lawrence.  |
| **02.16** | **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** |
| There were no declarations of interest. |
| **03.16** | **MINUTES** |
| The minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2016 were approved as a correct record.  |
| **04.16** | **MATTERS ARISING** |
| The meeting received and noted a paper (Appendix B) that provided an update about the status of action items referred from previous meetings. It was noted that: -* The ABR report for Surrey had yet to be published;
* 16-18 student enrolments at the census date was 1670, against a funding target of 1653. This was a pleasing outcome although below the internal target. January enrolments could increase the final count.
* Again this year there had been a high level of early withdrawals/no shows. Feedback from follow-up calls made to students who had indicated that they were going to enrol but who didn’t was that schools were putting a lot of effort into retaining students into their 6th forms.
* Consideration was being given to putting back the date of enrolment in the summer. NESCOT enrolled about a week before other colleges and schools and there was a view that students enrolled with NESCOT and then subsequently returned to school.
* A report on early drop-out and no shows would be brought to the next meeting **(ACTION: DS)**.
* It was suggested that students could be asked to assist during enrolment and on Open Days to talk about their experience of studying at NESCOT with potential students and parents etc. **(ACTION: CH).**
* There had been a general switch away from L1/L2 courses towards apprenticeships.
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| **05.16** | **NEW KPIs** |
| The outturn curriculum KPIs for 2015/16 were noted. The red-flagged apprenticeship success rates for 16-18 students were expected to rise as achievement data was still being processed. The new CQC targets for the 2016/17 academic year were **APPROVED**. All targets were above the national benchmarks.  |
| **06.16** | **STUDENT PERFORMANCE** |
| **06.01 English and Maths Report & Action Plan****06.02 Student Outcomes 2015/16****06.03 Value- Added Scores 2015/16** | The Chair reminded Governors that the Chair of the Corporation had said that improving English and Maths GCSE results was the number one priority for the College. C&Q Committee would give this issue particular focus.A report on the results for summer 2016 was presented. It was reported that: -1. The number of students studying GCSE English had doubled in 2015/16;
2. The number of students studying GCSE Mathematics had trebled;
3. All students who had failed to achieve a grade D at GCSE level or who had achieved Functional Skills at level 1 were required to follow a one year GCSE programme at the College;
4. GCSE English A\* to C passes had declined for the second year in succession;
5. GCSE English and Maths A\* to C passes were below the national average for FE colleges;
6. The number of students who had improved by one grade was 27% for GCSE English and 31% for Mathematics. National averages for GFEs were not available.

The post-inspection action plan and the quality improvement plan for English and Maths was discussed. These had focused on * Increasing student attendance (83% or above).
* Resolving timetabling issues by week 3.
* Obtaining positive student feedback on the English and Mathematics induction.
* Completion of the first controlled assessment at the end of week 6.
* Improving the quality of target setting of students.
* Improving the reliability of students’ predicted grades using success rate tracker.
* The deployment of Teaching and Learning coaches to work with English and Mathematics teachers.
* The recruitment of additional subject teachers.
* Limiting group sizes where possible.

The Assistant Principal now has curriculum responsibility for English and Mathematics only. A new Head of Mathematics had been appointed. The Head of English was leaving the College and the post was being advertised. The Committee asked whether staff turnover and teacher recruitment were particular issues in this area. Although there was churn it was not considered to be particularly high. Recruitment of new teachers was difficult but the College had received a good number of quality applications in response to recent advertisements. The College advertised in FE Week, Eteach and the TES. A suggestion was made by members of the Committee to consider the offer of an introduction fee to existing staff for recommending candidates who were appointed **(ACTION: MH/CH).** NESCOT was working with other colleges in Surrey to identify best practice and to introduce peer reviews. Brooklands College had particularly good results in English and a visit was to take place (Brooklands used the iGCSE qualification). Collaboration was also taking place in relation to focused professional development for English and Mathematics teachers.A review of last year had indicated that the balance of curriculum focus between the controlled assessments and exam practice was wrong. There would be more focus on exam practice and past papers this year. As the course was a one year programme it was not possible to teach the whole syllabus. It was also felt that it would be better to pay attention to E to C grade questions rather than the more challenging areas of the syllabus. There was discussion about the identification of students’ weaker areas and knowledge gaps and how to focus on these in the improvement strategy. Students were individually assessed at the start of each topic to determine their level and their areas for improvement. Students’ confidence in English and Mathematics was a very important factor in determining their success. The use of ‘Growth Mindsets’ was advocated at some colleges. The key was to motivate students to overcome their lack of self-confidence and apprehension in studying subjects that they perceived they were not good at and in which they had not previously been successful. It was also reported that the grade boundaries had changed quite considerably last year and this had affected student outcomes across the GFE college sector. Student governors discussed their experience of English and Mathematics classes. There was concern about the lack of homework setting, the absence of sanctions for students who did not complete work and continuing issues of disruptive behaviour by some students in student groups. This was holding back students who wanted to achieve. There was discussion about how widespread these issues were and what would be done to address them. The report was received. The Principal reported that an external adviser would be engaged to review the area, which would now take place when the new Heads of Departments for English and Mathematics were in post. A full report on student progress would be brought to the next meeting **(ACTION: MH).**The Committee reviewed the data on student outcomes in 2015/16. The Committee noted that: -* Headline Achievement rates (previously called Success rates) had fallen slightly by 0.3% but were still nearly 4% above the national average. This was at a qualification level and not Study Programme level which included English and Maths. If reported at Study Programme level, the English and Maths results would pull the overall Achievement rate down.
* Headline Achievement rates were above national average for 16-18 students and 19+.
* Level 3 results were very good for 19+ students in particular at 100%.
* Outcomes at departmental level indicated concerns about Plastering, Brickwork, Early Years and Art and Design. The background to these issues were understood and being addressed.
* Media and Gaming, Care and Foundation Learning were below national benchmark. All other departments were above national average.
* 98% of students had achieved positive (Intended) destinations, compared to 90% in 2014/15. It was noted that actual destinations are now also collected and would be reported to the next meeting **(ACTION: DS).**
* The FE progression rate below Level 3 had dipped slightly from 71% to 67%.
* The number of high grade achievements (Merit and Distinctions) had declined at both Level 2 and 3.
* Analysis by protected characteristics indicated performance differentials by ethnicity and disability which were being reviewed. There was a small differential between male and female students (female students achieved higher success rates) but this in part reflected the gender profile on certain course areas that were known to be underperforming, such as the construction trades.
* Apprenticeship success rates were very good at 19+ and above national benchmark; performance was less good for younger apprentices and were currently below national average but this was in part as a result of the late processing of results.
* It was noted that most 19+ apprenticeship provision was delivered by sub-contractors whereas 16-18 provision was largely in-house. This should be noted in the context of the strategy to move to more in-house apprenticeship provision.
* Performance data on HE programmes was positive overall, although in-year retention was only 73%.

The report was received. The Committee examined outcomes measured using value-added datasets. The ALPS (Advanced Level Performance System) assessment for NESCOT remained grade 4 which was ‘Very Good’ and in the 60th to 70th percentile. Value-added score were outstanding in Sport, Travel and Tourism and Music and good in Business, Media, Health and Social Care, Music Technology and Public Services. IT was weak using this measure. The report was received.  |
| **07.16** | **HIGHER EDUCATION ASSURANCE STATEMENT** |
| The Committee was advised that The Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) had introduced a new requirement that providers of higher education issue a statement of assurance signed by the Accountable Officer on behalf of the Governing Body regarding:- * the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and of student outcomes; and
* the reliability of degree standards.

The assurance statement had to be returned for HEFCE by 01 December 2016. This was before the date of the scheduled Corporation meeting and therefore C&Q Committee was requested to review the assurance requirement and the evidence from the College and to make a recommendation to the Governing Body for determination by written resolution. HEFCE require the following statement from FE colleges providing higher education to be confirmed either **fully** or, as this is a new and belatedly notified requirement, **partially** for the previous academic year, 2015/16: * *The governing body has received and discussed a report and accompanying action plan relating to the continuous improvement of the student academic experience and student outcomes. This included evidence from the provider’s own periodic review processes, which fully involve students and include embedded external peer or professional review.*
* *The methodologies used as a basis to improve the student academic experience and student outcomes are, to the best of our knowledge, robust and appropriate.*

*For providers with degree awarding powers:* * *The standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately set and maintained.*

*For providers without degree awarding powers:* * *The standards of awards for which we are responsible have been appropriately maintained.*

A detailed and comprehensive report was presented to the Committee which included information about the quality assurance framework for higher education programmes at NESCOT, the Committee and quality process reporting structure, the relationship with its HEI partners (University of Surrey, University of Greenwich and Kingston University) and Pearson (for HNC/D programmes). Details of how the student experience of higher education at NESCOT is captured and acted upon were set out. Outcomes data from the National Student Survey (NSS), Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) and internal student satisfaction surveys was presented. It was noted that in a recent visit from HEFCE, NESCOT current performance profile for higher education provision would result in a ‘Silver’ assessment hypothesis under the new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) which was considered to be very good. This Committee agreed that the evidence presented showed that: - * NESCOT’s HE provision is regarded highly by students, is above national benchmark and has improved compared to the previous year, 2014/15.
* The student experience is at the heart of the quality assurance and improvement process
* There is a robust and embedded framework for assuring the quality of the HE offer at NESCOT, supported by the academic and regulatory frameworks provided by our partner HEIs.
* Whilst improving the response rate of students to the DLHE survey is a priority for this year, it is pleasing that only 3% of NESCOT’s graduates/completers are unemployed 6 months after finishing their studies. 71% of students are in graduate-level roles or are pursuing further study and the starting salary of students is close to the average national salary level at £24,800.
* A robust action plan is in place to address priority areas for course enhancement, student recruitment and improving data collection rates.

**RESOLVED:** that a recommendation to the Governing Board to be approved by written resolution be made that a statement of full assurance be provided to HEFCE for the academic year 2015/16. |
| **08.16** | **NOTIFICATION OF SUB-CONTRACTORS** |
| It was noted that no new sub-contractors had been appointed for 2016/17.  |
| **09.16** | **COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT** |
| The Committee considered its self-assessment report for 2015/16 and reviewed how it met its terms of reference. Areas of strength and areas for improvement were identified. The following were **AGREED** as areas for development in the current year: -* Supporting the College to improve English and Maths GCSE outcomes
* Higher Education
* To ensure that high professional standards and skills for working life and active citizenship become strengths in all curriculum areas.

**RESOLVED:** that the Self-Assessment Report for the Curriculum and Quality Committee be approved.  |
| **10.16** | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** |
| There was no further business and the meeting ended at 20.00. |
| **11.16** | **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS** |
| Wednesday 01 March 2017 at 6.00pmWednesday 03 May 2017 at 6.00pm |

Signed ……………………………………………………….

**Chris Muller, Chair of the Curriculum & Quality Committee**

Date ……………………

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| Author | David Round |
| Title | NESCOT Curriculum & Quality Committee Minutes 09 November 2016 |
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